

Breakcore artist goes minimal

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What is theater?

The 75-year-old director Lin Zhaohua has devoted his life to the stage. Now he is exploring the nature of the art during his 2011 festival at the Capital Theater.

By reintroducing Chinese classics and foreign avant-garde, he hopes China's dramatics will be inspired to return to their roots.

Read more on Page 12-13



Pages 8 Canadian's tricycle calligraphy

This tricycle sighted is the brain child of Canadian teacher Nicholas Hanna. The rear hoses, controlled by Hanna's laptop, spray out calligraphy when he types. The invention was inspired by the sponge calligraphy often seen in Beijing parks.

State telecoms could face antitrust suit

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Gov regrets chengguans' poor image

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Students recruited to sell their ova

The black market in stem cells, such as ova and sperm, is booming thanks to a ban on their sale and donation.



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Rebirth after the quake

Women who lost their children in the Wenchuan earthquake hope that by having another baby, the souls of their dead children will have a chance to return.

Brush master balances old and new art

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Photographic effects shrink scenes of city

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City plans 5 cultural industry parks in 5 years

By Zhao Hongyi

Beijing will build five cultural industry parks for enterprises and individuals during the next five years, according to sources at the 6th China Beijing International Cultural and Creative Industry Expo.

The five zones will be the New Tongzhou Cultural and Creative Industry Zone, the Beijing Industrial Cultural and Creative Zone, the Longfu Cultural and Creative Zone, the Blue Ocean Cultural and Creative Zone and the Yizhuang Sports Cultural and Creative Zone.

Beijing State-Owned Assets Management Company will be the major investor in all five zones.

Zhi Jun, president of the company, said it will invite creative companies to settle in the area after construction is complete.

The New Tongzhou Cultural and Creative Industry Zone will be located on the site of the former Beijing Optical Instrument Factory, which has left the downtown. It will be close to the existing Tongzhou Cultural Zone, which is home to the Songzhuang Artists Community and several fashion firms.

The Beijing Industrial Cultural and Creative Zone will be on the site of the former Beijing Coal Gasification Factory. The investor says it wants to cooperate with private inves-

tors and foreign investors to build the zone.

The zone will connect to the existing Legend Town, another industrial design park on the site of the former Beijing Jingmian Textile Group's 2nd Factory. The park has received 125 industrial design companies, provided 10,000 jobs and has an annual turnover over 10 billion yuan.

Longfu Cultural and Creative Zone will be on the side of the Longfu Temple in downtown. This area has long been a commercial street for cultural products, restaurants and worshipers. The zone will be built and developed to reflect these historical characteristics.

Blue Ocean Cultural and Creative Zone neighbors the Chinese Ethnic Cultural Park to the south of the Bird's Nest. The zone is expected to become a comprehensive cultural industry park with creative cultural products, educational products and tourism products.

Yizhuang Sports Cultural and Creative Zone will be in the southern part of the city. The zone will be a center of sports and related industries.

The investor is the wholly state-owned company and the investor and manager of the Bird's Nest and Water Cube. It is also one of the investors in Legend Town, a successful cultural park.

"The investor will provide a platform. The step that is crucial to success is inviting the right companies and individuals to settle in the new zones," said Ming Lekang, a professor at the Creative Research Center of Renmin University.

He said the municipal government's determination to develop the creative cultural industry shows that the capital is headed in the right direction.

The city has been emphasizing cultural and creative design for the past five years.

Relevant industries generated a combined output worth 6.57 billion yuan and a revenue stream of more than 800 million last year.

Wi-Fi service arrives on domestic flights

By Han Manman

Air China, the country's largest carrier, began offering in-flight Wi-Fi service on its Beijing-Chengdu route on Tuesday.

Customers will be able to use the service to play games, watch movies, listen to music and shop, but not to access the Internet.

The trial period ends December 31, after which Air China will be the first domestic airline to offer in-flight Wi-Fi.

The carrier has already received approval from the Civil Aviation Administration of China, said Bao Lida, a spokesman for its southwest branch.

Access will be free, but Internet searches will be limited to certain entertainment and tourism services, such as shopping, room reservation and car rental. Access will only be available while the airplane is at cruising altitude.

Bao said passengers can use laptops and tablet computers to visit the Wireless Local Area Network, but mobile phones, especially iPhones, must be turned off on Wi-Fi-enabled aircraft – even if their SIM cards are removed.

Bao said Air China will make an effort to provide land-to-air communication through the Wi-Fi network in the future, in order to ensure that every passenger can access the Internet during flight.

If everything goes as



A stewardess instructs a passenger in the use of the flight's wireless network service.

Xinhua Photo

planned, a wireless network will be established later this month on a second plane, an Airbus 321 jet flying between Beijing and Shanghai, said Fan Heyun, a senior manager with Air China's marketing department.

"Gradually, the network will be available on Air China's major domestic routes," he said, adding, "The network service will first be available on single-aisle planes and then on wider jets."

In April, Air China agreed

to work with China Telecom, the largest telecommunications operator in the country, on projects that will enable passengers to surf the Internet and use cell phones. It did not set a specific schedule for that work's completion.

Deutsche Lufthansa AG was the first airline to provide passengers broadband access to the Internet in 2005.

The company began providing broadband access to the Internet on intercontinental routes at the end of 2010.

Olympic champions of '88, '92 cry foul over company's fake gifts

By Zhao Hongyi

Zhuang Xiaoyan was the Women's Judo champion of the 1992 Olympic Games in Barcelona, Spain.

At that Olympics, she and 17 other Chinese athletes brought home gold medals. Upon their return, they were praised by the Chinese media and were presented with "golden cans" by the Guangdong sports drink maker Jianlibao at the Great Hall of the People.

Earlier this year, Zhuang found her can was turning dark. When she took it to a local appraiser, she learned that the can contained only a dozen grams of gold: the rest was mixed with silver and base metal.

She and many of China's other Olympic heroes of the era are now preparing a lawsuit.

Among them is Gao Min, a famous swimmer of the early 1990s, who was awarded two golden cans for her victories at the 1988 Seoul Olympic Games and 1992 Barcelona Games.

Gao showed a press release Jianlibao sent to media groups in 1988, which stated the cans were made of 125 grams of gold



Many Olympic heroes suspect they were cheated with fake golden cans.

CFP Photo

over a silver base and decorated with rosewood inlays.

Gao said she suspects Jianlibao promoted itself with the golden can awards in its early stages of development. "If the group gave us fakes, shouldn't it bear some legal responsibility?" she said.

Between 1988 and 1992, 22 champions received 24 cans.

Zhang Shan, champion of the shooting event at the 1992 Barcelona Olympic Games, said she was hurt and angry after receiving

a phone call from Zhuang.

"I have to admire the company's move," Zhang said. "It hijacked the rings of the Olympic Games to promote itself."

Lu Guang, one of the lawyers hired by Zhuang Xiaoyan, said he has sent a report about the evidence he had collected to Jianlibao Group.

The group said it reported the case to the local police in Foshan. The company has refused to take responsibility, saying the officials who were in

charge at the time the cans were awarded have already left.

"It's very possible that Jianlibao was also cheated," the lawyer said. "But even if Jianlibao was cheated, the group bears some responsibility for awarding the fake cans."

"We are hoping to settle this dispute without getting the courts involved."

Local media have supported the athletes' cause, but lawyers are more interested in the details of the award process.

"The athletes should have a photo of themselves receiving the two awards and evidence that Jianlibao cheated them," said Jin Changsheng, a lawyer of civil crimes and disputes at Dacheng Lawyer Office in Beijing. "Without evidence, Jianlibao has the right to sue them for slander."

After a week of inspection, the final quality report came out on Wednesday this week.

The report said the golden cans weighed 164.5 grams and was covered with gold leaf and silver. The cans had an estimated value of 100 yuan.

The findings were confirmed by the producers.

Wu Jincheng, one of the two masters at Guangzhou Gold and Silver Jewellery, remembered when the company produced the cans for Jianlibao.

He said the golden can he received this week from Cheng Longchan, the men's ping pong champion of 1992, was not the one his company made.

"We are experts at producing such works," Wu said. "But this can is far below our skill level, even the skills we had 20 years ago."

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Top students sell ova to black market

"Markets develop where there is a need. A black market forms when there is a demand that the law drives underground."

By Chu Meng

The capital's black market trade in human ova is targeting female students at highly ranked universities, whose eggs can sell for tens of thousands of yuan, the *Beijing News* reported Monday.

Despite the Ministry of Health's 1998 ban on commercialization of human embryonic stem cells – including ova and sperm – there are reports of a number of agencies in Beijing controlling a sophisticated chain that solicits students as ova sellers and performs both invitro fertilization and the surgery to implant the egg.

Students at Tsinghua University and Peking University are among the most sought after. According to the report, ova traders have paid off many obstetricians and nurses to assist in physical examinations and surgery.

Clients, usually middle-aged couples who are infertile, usually discover the black market on the Internet.

A *Beijing News* reporter posed as a Peking University student carried out the undercover investigation. In mid-October, she accessed the Peking University campus network to read its forums and found advertisements offering to buy students' ova. Contact information for these ads was a QQ number or an account at the social networking site Renren.

The reporter contacted one of the most popular advertisers, nicknamed "Mo Mo" on QQ, and was asked to attend an interview with an intermediary agent at a cafe in Zhongguancun.

The agent said ova from students at Tsinghua University and Peking University sold for 30,000 yuan, and ova from students of all other universities sold for 5,000 yuan.

"Prices are set according to the specific requirements of the client. Some ask only for girls with double-fold eyelids or good eyesight," the agent said.

On October 22, the reporter sat with more than 10 students from surrounding universities at a cafe to face the clients, most of whom were middle-aged couples.

Mo Mo introduced each of



Students are contacted through their campus network and taken to Zhongguancun to meet with black market ova traders.

CFP Photos

the students and allowed the clients to examine them from a distance. Students and clients were not allowed to speak to each other, and all questions were filtered through Mo Mo. Most couples asked about the students' height, blood type, health, personalities and hobbies.

The interview ended after 40 minutes.

The agent told the students they would be notified in seven days if they had been selected by one of the couples.

From the interview, the reporter found Li Qing (pseudonym), a 20-year-old student, had donated an ovum in a surgery in early 2010.

After physical examination at a private hospital, whose obstetricians and nurses were in the employ of the black market, she was injected with medicines that encourage the formation and release of ova.

"They stuck me with one needle per day for eight consecutive days," she said. Her body did not feel any different, except for aches in her arms, after each injection.

After that, she had a non-surgical procedure to remove the ovum. A tube was inserted into her vagina, and the ovum was removed and frozen immediately.

Li said she felt uncomfortable during the operation, but quickly



Select students are brought to a private hospital for physical examination.



An agent shows students to their clients in this undercover photo taken in a café.

recovered after a few days resting at the dorm. She had received 5,000 yuan for "nutrition fees" before the procedure.

"I didn't know anything about what came next. No one told me whether the clients would be receiving invitro fertilization at the same hospital," she said. While Li does not regret selling her ova, she said she would never tell her friends, classmates, family or boyfriend about it.

Li's ovum was artificially



University students await an interview with the clients.

Xue Qing, a doctor at the Maternity and Children's Hospital of Peking University, said private operations do little to guarantee the rights of the donors.

She also warned that artificially induced ovulation may result in ovarian hyper stimulation syndrome, which can result in bloating, pulmonary embolism, kidney failure and death.

The mature industry and huge profits are a reminder of how few avenues there are for legal egg donation, egg acquisition and surrogacy.

"Markets develop where there is a need. A black market forms when there is a demand that the law drives underground," said Wang Yanguang, a researcher at the Beijing Institute of Life Science at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

Data from 2004 showed that nearly 10 percent of Chinese couples are infertile, either because of the man or the woman. But today, the country lacks both a legal ova pool and legal channels for buying and selling ova.

"There is not even a standard medical procedure for infertile couples to acquire ova from the hospital," he said. "Under Chinese law, it is illegal to buy human eggs or receive them for free. Only women who have extra eggs while undergoing invitro fertilization can donate their eggs to others. This is extremely rare."

The demand for eggs and the ban on their sale has resulted in a black market where infertile couples are happy to pay 50,000 to 100,000 yuan to find willing women donors or surrogate mothers.

Li Benfu, professor and director of the Chinese Society of Medical Ethics, said the country is in serious need of legal ova pools.

"It will not only benefit infertile couples, the country's regular embryonic stem cell researchers need access to such pools too. Embryonic stem cells, including ova and sperm, can be used to find new treatments for disease and to develop new medicines," Li said.

fertilized before it was put into the female client or surrogate, Mo Mo told the *Beijing News* reporter over QQ.

"This is forbidden in regular hospitals, so we usually go to private or foreign-invested hospitals," she said.

There are no contracts or agreement papers signed between the donor and the agency, or between the agency and the client. The business is run mouth-to-mouth and leaves no tangible evidence.

APEC leaders make strides in Honolulu

The global press attending the annual Asia Pacific Economic Conference (APEC) may have been disappointed by this past weekend. They waited outside hoping to get a shot of leaders in casual wear, as in years past, state heads have been seen in ponchos or silk tunics.

This year in Hawaii? There wasn't even a single floral lei.

The Chicago *Sun Times* reported the White House had a Honolulu designer craft a commemorative Hawaiian shirt, though leaders stuck with suits.

But that didn't affect the leaders at APEC reaching consensus. Xinhua reported the annual conference would promote economic integration and trade in the Asia Pacific region.

Green growth became a core element and represented the trend of economic and social development, the agency said.

At the meetings, Asia-Pacific leaders committed to cutting the aggregate energy intensity of the region by 45 percent by 2035. They also declared regulatory convergence and cooperation, encouraging all members to take steps by 2013 to implement good regulatory practices.



The global media expected more decorative dress from the leaders at the APEC Leaders' Summit. Getty Images/CFP Photo

China voice Country will play by rules

China will play by the rules of international agreements that it has been party to negotiating, Pang Sen, a deputy director-general of the Foreign Ministry, said last Sunday.

Pang's remarks were a clear rebuttal to US President Barack Obama, who earlier said that China should play by the rules of the international community in economic affairs.

"We have to know whose

rules we are talking about," Pang said.

"If the rules are made collectively through agreement and China is a part of it, then China will abide by them. If rules are decided by one or even several countries, China does not have the obligation to abide by that," Pang said at a news conference after the APEC summit in Honolulu.

Pang also said that the coun-

try would "earnestly study" the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade negotiations.

President Hu Jintao pledged on Sunday that China will boost both imports and domestic demand as the world's second-largest economy embraces a more balanced economic structure.

He called on regional countries to change their growth model to better meet

the challenge of a struggling global economy.

Addressing APEC leaders, Hu said sustainable growth was vital for economic recovery and long-term development.

"We should speed up the shifting of the growth model and adjust the economic structure," he said.

Hu said that developed countries should adopt responsible macroeconomic policies

and properly handle sovereign debt and fiscal risks. Emerging markets, he added, should boost domestic demand and promote growth through the combined forces of consumption, investment and exports.

Analysts said that Hu's speech sent a clear message that China is committed to economic cooperation, both regionally and further afield.

(Agencies)

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Trust-busters target telecoms

State-owned enterprises investigated in antitrust probe

By Huang Daohen

Many foreign investors were worried when the central government passed its first Anti-Monopoly Law in late 2007. At the time, it seemed like a club to beat back the success of private firms.

Today that law is being used to break up a state-owned enterprise.

The country's top economic planner said it is investigating telecom giants China Unicom and China Telecom for a potential antitrust violation. The unusual move may be a sign that the government plans to open up industries that have long been dominated by such state-owned firms.



Two of the largest mobile operators are being investigated on suspicion of violating antitrust laws in their Internet business.

CFP Photo

Internet annoyance

Getting online can be easy in the capital.

Hop into a Starbucks and grab a 25-yuan drink for an afternoon of free Wi-Fi. If that doesn't work, the neighborhood Internet cafe sells access for 3 to 5 yuan per hour.

But if you are planning to stay a little bit longer and want to get broadband Internet in your home, you might be incredibly disappointed with the results.

Mickey Chen was.

Chen, a 26-year-old PR consultant, moved into her new apartment in September. Like most young people, the first thing on her list after moving in was to get Internet access.

She called up Broad Netcom, one of the city's major Internet service providers, and chose a 4Mbps package that cost 1,880 yuan annually.

The company later sent a man on bike, and within one or two hours, the broadband connection was installed. "The speed of the Internet was very good the first couple weeks. Chinese sites load quickly, though the access to foreign websites was problematic," Chen said.

Chen's enthusiasm for broadband was quickly dampened when she realized the high speed came only in the daytime. From 8 to 11 pm, her data rate crashed to around 10 kilobits per second.

"It takes almost five minutes to load one webpage," Chen said. Worse still, the connection often failed.

Chen wasn't the only user to complain about expensive and unstable Internet service.

Many Internet providers throw around big numbers like 8Mbps and 10Mbps, but they fail to provide the practical infrastructure needed to support the connections they are selling, said a staff member surnamed Wang at the Shifoying outlet of the Great Wall Broadband Network, another Internet provider.

Wang said the company also received a huge number of telephone complaints.

"Operators are only interested in signing more contracts with clients, but

are unable to offer satisfying service," he said.

Antitrust probe

Market analysts say bad Internet access can be blamed on a state monopoly.

The country's top economic planning body, the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), agreed.

Last week, the commission said it has launched an antitrust investigation into the Internet services of China Telecom and China Unicom.

China Central Television first reported the investigation. On November 11, two newspapers operating under Industry and Information Technology Ministry published follow-ups on the news.

The CCTV report said the investigation started in May after many enterprises and Web users complained about the two companies. With their market dominance, the two companies were blocking other corporations from entering the broadband market, an enterprise said.

Last year, China Telecom and China Unicom controlled 85 percent of the nation's Internet use.

Li Qing, deputy director of the NDRC and leader of the investigation, told Xinhua that the probe has found that the two have taken advantage of their dominance by charging high prices to market rivals while offering discounts to those who do not threaten their businesses.

Li called that price discrimination, an illegal practice.

If found guilty, the two companies may face fines of between 1 and 10 percent of their gross revenue, Xinhua reported.

Last year, China Telecom's revenue from the Internet access business was 50 billion yuan, while China Unicom's was close to 30 billion yuan.

China Unicom said in a statement last week that it is cooperating with the investigation and the company has always provided broadband services strictly "in accordance with the relevant laws and regulations."

As of press time, China Telecom could not be reached for comment.

Opening the market

Market analysts say the investigation is rare and unusual.

It marks the first time that a state-owned enterprise has been investigated for suspected violation of the country's Anti-Monopoly Law, said Wu Yong, an expert in the telecom field and a lawyer at a Beijing law office.

It is also the first probe launched by the NDRC, Wu said. He believes it is a sign the country will pursue more antitrust probes as it opens state-controlled industries.

Wu said there has long been discussions over whether the country's oversized state monopolies threaten its economy.

Last year, among the Global 500 enterprises filed by *Fortune Magazine*, 21 companies from the Chinese mainland were listed. All were hunking state-owned enterprises, dominating the fields of finance, construction and telecommunications.

That's not something to be proud about, Wu said.

Instead it exposed serious problems in the country's economy structure.

State control can mean stability, but it prevents free competition. In the case of telecoms, more operators would naturally result in fewer complaints and faster Internet speeds, he said.

But the opening up of monopolized industries is a sure thing. Premier Wen Jiabao said in his government work report that the country will accelerate the reform of these areas.

"We will create a market environment that ensures fair competition among economic entities under diverse forms of ownership, and that facilitates stronger growth of the non-public sector," Wen said.

The government pledged to loosen its grip and invite private companies to compete, he said.

And that is what Wu expects to see.

"The private firms are more comparable with their counterparts in Europe and the US. Only when those companies are among the Fortune 500 will China have something to feel proud about," he said.

Market watch

Domestic condom maker targets Europe

By Huang Daohen

Safedom, a Shandong-based condom maker, is one of the few Chinese firms attempting to plunge into the already saturated European prophylactic market.

The company, which formerly targeted women's cosmetics, recently announced its plans to start selling condoms in Europe. Fu Qiang, the company's founder and CEO, was seen in the UK last week, the London-based *Sunday Times* reported.

Fu was there to seek local partners as part of the company's bid to go global. "We have leading technology and a good management team. What we lack now is branding, because we are not that well known," Fu said.

An acquisition could help the company break into the European market, he said.

Fu's comments were an understatement.

The brand is poorly recognized even by domestic consumers, even though its condom sales are expected to hit 200 million this year in the mainland market alone.

The company, a family-owned enterprise founded in 2006, has seen rapid growth within its short life. Fu said the sales of Safedom condoms will reach 1 billion next year.

The domestic market is never enough to satisfy ambitious businessmen like Fu. Although the condom market has huge potential in China, due to the population size and family planning policy, Safedom sees its future abroad.

Fu said the company hopes to begin selling condoms in Africa as well.

Statistics from Bloomberg News show that the sales of condoms across the globe is set to hit 27 billion by 2015, with a total worth of \$6 billion (\$8.1 billion yuan).

Wen Yijun, an analyst with Oriental Securities in Beijing, said the time is right for Safedom to go abroad as condom giant Durex is suffering from a supply shortage due to a legal spat with its Indian partner TTK Lig.

Durex condoms account for more than 40 percent of the global market, among which 1.3 billion are produced by TTK every year.

Wen said TTK's halting of its supplies to Durex has caused a shortage since May, and consumers are turning to other brands.

It is an opportunity for Safedom, which has warehouses of unsold condoms. The company just needs to make its name known, Wen said.

Image makeover for chengguan?



Many hope chengguan professionals can become better trained.

CFP Photo

By Zhao Hongyi

Chengguan – licensed enforcers who aren't officially cops – haven't done themselves any favors when it comes to their public image. People often complain about their strong-arm tactics, made all the worse by the fact that the municipal government seems to want to expand their power.

The government also wants to improve their reputation.

The city announced earlier this week the creation of the Beijing Municipal Bureau of City Administration and Law Enforcement, the capital's headquarters for chengguan, which will operate as a sub-bureau under the Municipal

Commission of City Administration and Environment. Essentially, the bureau is in charge of administrative and legal issues related to chengguan.

"We'll provide more training to the employees of the bureau to improve their performance," said Zhou Zhengyu, deputy secretary of the municipal government.

Beijing started trial use of chengguan in 1997. The major task of chengguan is to arrange city planning, which includes bullying street vendors, removing unapproved signs and ads, supervising construction sites and helping take homeless people off the streets.

In 2000, the chengguan system went into effect with about 10,000 officers.

But the actions of chengguan have racked up bad press. The municipal bureau doesn't have the reach to supervise the street teams in every district and county.

"There were many negative repercussions to law enforcement because of the low quality of chengguan," Zhou said.

Still, Beijing's program inspired nearly every Chinese city to set up their own street teams.

The result has not been pleasant. The near-daily battle between chengguan and street vendors has been

well documented online.

Taking care of the homeless has also been a hassle. Many homeless shelters are struggling financially, so the homeless simply wind up back on the streets – dealt with by chengguan with shortening patience and tempers.

The word chengguan has even entered the lexicon as a synonym for violence. "Don't be a chengguan" means don't be a bully.

"We aim to streamline the street teams to improve our administration and enforcement and reverse our public image," said Wang Lianju, deputy director of the municipal bureau.

Debate of the week

A Master's in mistresses

A class known as the Wife Academy is to begin in Beijing to teach women to deal with various marital issues, including how to respond if their husband has a mistress.

The class, charging tuition fees of 100,000 yuan, has become a major topic of conversation as the teachers will not only provide lectures but offer after-class services for the wealthy wives.

Now that there are classes for wives on how to handle extramarital issues, many netizens think it will only be a matter of time before there are classes for mistresses on how to handle jealous wives.

Experts say it is unrealistic to solve one's marriage problems by taking such classes. "Mistresses are not the cause of marital problems, but rather an indicator that all is not well," one expert said.

Netizens said that wives who attend classes like this are "too bored to do anything" and are delusional to think they can preserve their marriage just by spending some money.

Figures from the Ministry of Civil Affairs show that in the first three quarters of 2011, 2.8 million couples registered for divorce in China, up 12 percent year-on-year.

In the last five years, the number of divorces has steadily increased by about 7 percent year-on-year. In first-tier cities like Beijing and Shanghai, the rate has reportedly surpassed 30 percent.

Love from Wolf Dad

Love your kids, then prove it by beating them.

After the Tiger Mom Amy Chua, here comes a Wolf Dad. Xiao Baiyou, a Hong Kong businessman, described in his controversial parenting memoir how he had "beaten" his three children to attend Peking University.

"A cane is a good staff. It crushes no bones but it hurts badly. This hurt shall be remembered," said Xiao.

Xiao's rules are simple. First, no access to TV and Internet, and then no Coca Cola and air conditioning in the summer.

(Agencies)

Debate

BEIJING TODAY Editor: Huang Daoheng Designer: Deng Ning

Comment

Consolidation might lead to improvement

The consolidation will enable the bureau to coordinate with other departments of the municipal government. For instance, if you drive away a small vendor, maybe someone else will suggest another space where they can make a living. You send a homeless man away, maybe he's taken to a settlement. Here's to hoping the chengguan can do better in the future.

– Xiong Wenzhao, professor, Minzu University of China

Coordination more important than forceful enforcement

We do not have such a government force in my hometown of New York. We have cops and a traffic violation bureau. It might be that Beijing and China has such a huge population that the police can't cover it alone. That explains why the Chinese government set up the chengguan.

But city management and maintenance needs the cooperation of the police, chengguan and citizens. Chinese public service needs improvement. You should not drive vendors away from the street. Instead, chengguan and police have

the responsibility to coordinate with the authorities to create venues where these vendors can operate.

– Tim Mathews, student from New York

Chengguan should work with citizens

Street management teams should work with citizens, vendors and the homeless to help solve their problems rather than simply driving them away. Winning the understanding of the public is the only way for chengguan to get things done.

– Wu Gang, professor, Beijing Administrative College

Chengguan should get better

Enforcing the law shouldn't make one feel empowered. Chengguan should improve their communication with people instead of exercising an iron fist all the time.

The reason there have been so many scandals involving quarrels and fights is because chengguan aren't adequately trained. They should get to learn their communities and neighborhoods where they work. Only that way can they expect to win people over using persuasion.

– Wang Wei, reporter, Beijing Youth Daily

Canadian artist paints Chinese characters by tricycle

By Han Manman

When Canadian media artist Nicholas Hanna first pedaled his specially designed tricycle to write Chinese characters on the ground in Beijing's Dashilar district, he didn't think he'd become a local sensation with hundreds of followers.

Literally, hundreds of followers – they trail his tricycle as it deposits water to form words.

"People were really intrigued at this wacky and hilarious tricycle when they saw it on street, and they were even more surprised to see it pedaled by a foreigner," Hanna said.

"I knew many would think, 'What is this crazy foreigner doing?' when they saw me," Hanna said. "But when they stopped to look at the tricycle carefully, they all liked it."

Hanna, who moved to Beijing in 2009, has always had a special interest in calligraphy. Whenever he had time, he'd go to local parks to see people writing calligraphy in water on the sidewalk. He thought this art form was lovely, and it always drew a crowd of onlookers.

"I already had an appreciation for the beauty and elegance of Chinese writing, but seeing it written like that in the park was particularly compelling for me," he said.

"I also like the futile aspect of writing with water. It defies the main purpose of writing, which is to make things permanent, to record and transmit thoughts and information. There's also a special beauty to the water strokes and the way they change as the water evaporates."

Hanna decided to put a spin on this delicate and ephemeral art.

His calligraphy device is mounted on a flatbed tricycle and passages in Chinese are inputted to a computer. Custom software then transmits signals to an electrical system that actuates a network of solenoid valves.

The valves release droplets of water as the tricycle moves forward, thus leaving Chinese characters that slowly evaporate.

The process – as one can tell – isn't easy. The final product is the result of programming and lots of tests and adjustments – trial and error.

Hanna recalled that when he first tested a prototype in



Hanna got the idea for a calligraphy tricycle after seeing locals writing characters in water on the sidewalk.

Photos provided by Nicholas Hanna



Locals are intrigued by the unique tricycle when they see it on street.



The apparatus is the result of programming and lots of tests and adjustments.

Beihai Park, he had a crowd of about 100 people around him asking various questions at the same time.

"Some people don't notice at all, and walk right by, but most people will notice that this tricycle is a little strange, and then they will notice the

marks on the ground and try to read them," Hanna said, adding that many times people will start to follow him. "The scene is really interesting."

Many netizens also expressed interest when they saw a video about this young foreigner pedaling his "weird" tri-

cycle around Beijing's streets.

Most applaud Hanna's idea as a way of promoting local awareness to a cherished form of traditional art. Some have even provided suggestions to Hanna for how to make bigger use of his work.

"This lovely water calligraphy device is probably the most effective, inexpensive and eco-friendly way for street propaganda I've seen so far," said a netizen named Chen Xiaobai. "I can see advertising potential in this, as tricycles cover roads and highways with printed messages like, 'Drink Coca-Cola' or 'Just do it.'"

But commerce isn't what Hanna's after.

It's creativity.

Hanna said he has witnessed the city's efforts to be a creative and cultural city, but that much more needs to be done.

"I think for a city to be 'creative' you need three things: space for designers to work, clients to hire designers for projects and a strong community," he said.

Hanna said Beijing has lots of space and lots of clients, "but the clients don't yet understand the value and importance of good design. There are a lot of designers but I think the community needs to develop more."

Hanna, a native of Mon-

tréal, was trained as an architect at McGill University in Montreal and at Yale University. He worked as an architect for a few years before deciding the career was too constraining.

In 2009, he came to Beijing thinking the new environment would be good for him to envision his future. The place provided him opportunities to try new things.

While teaching in the international program at the China Central Academy of Fine Arts, he did some freelance work in architecture. He also got the chance to collaborate with Chinese artists to develop an interactive light installation. After that experience, he committed himself full-time to media and installation art and decided to change his focus from architecture.

Hanna demonstrated his water writer at last month's Beijing Design Week, an experience that gave him much joy and confidence to move forward.

It's convinced him to make media art his new career – he recently went to the US to begin a Master's program at UCLA in media arts. He said his focus for the next two years is to finish the degree and then produce more creative works.

"I think Beijing has a lot of potential, and a bright future as a creative city," he said.

Counselor reflects on Sino-Pakistani relationship

By Han Manman

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Pakistan. While the two governments launch a series of events in commemoration, 49-year-old Zamir Ahmed Awan, counselor of technical affairs at the Pakistan embassy in China, offered his perspective of the countries' relationship.

He was among the first Pakistani students to come to China in 1980, witnessing the country's turn from a conservative, closed society to one of open-mindedness and growth. While he has been happy about Pakistan and China's strengthening relationship, he also feels a great responsibility to pass on what he knows to the countries' younger generation of people.

Dream of studying in China

"I was so lucky to study in China in the 1980s, the beginning of the country's change since its reform and opening-up in 1978," Awan said in his office. "It was a really special period for China."

He paused for a sip of coffee, then added that change was obvious month after month.

Awan had dreamed of going to China since he was a child. The idea may have come from his father, who went to China in the 1940s when he served in the British army.

"My father told me lots of stories about his life in Hong Kong and Shanghai when I was a child," Awan said, adding that his father died when he was 11. But his father's experience abroad gave him a glowing impression.

After finishing high school, Awan decided to apply to study in China.

At that time, most Pakistani students preferred studying in the UK. Being a former British colony, it was convenient for Pakistanis to go to Britain.

"But so few Pakistanis chose to study in China at that time, not only because of the language barrier, but also because we had so little knowledge of the country," Awan said.

After a series of exams, Awan was selected as one of the four Pakistani students to study in China in 1980.

"My classmates and friends were all happy to hear I would go," he said. "Although China is a really strange country in their minds, we've all learned since childhood that China has

been very kind to Pakistan."

The first years

Awan came to Beijing in 1980. He said he was comparatively open-minded coming from a country that had long been affected by British culture, but he felt China was very conservative.

"On the street, it was hard to find people willing to talk to me," Awan said, adding that he felt locals were afraid to speak with foreigners like him.

After a year of language



Awan said more of Pakistan's young people are choosing to study in China in recent years.

Photo provided by Hebei North University

study at the Beijing Language and Culture University, Awan went to Shanghai in 1981 and spent six and a half years there to finish his Bachelor's and Master's degrees in engineering.

"Shanghai was more open to foreigners than Beijing," he said. "My teachers and classmates helped me a lot whenever I had difficulties. I could feel their warm-hearted kindness."

At the same time, however, Awan felt those teachers and classmates kept a careful distance from him.

Awan said at that time, the school prohibited Chinese stu-



Awan with his family on the border of China

Photo provided by Awan

changing – it was their attitudes about everything.

And it was their surroundings that changed, too. Every month, Awan recalled, a new road or a new building would be finished. And with that, a new culture was being born.

Hope for the younger generation

After leaving China, Awan worked in many other countries as an engineer, then in the Ministry of Science and Technology in Pakistan. In every new country, he'd find himself making Chinese friends.

Last year, Awan was appointed technical affairs counselor to China and returned to the country.

He said he felt the two countries are getting closer on many different levels.

More Pakistani students are choosing to study in China. Awan said more than 6,000 Pakistani students are currently studying in this country, including his son.

But Awan also said he doesn't think the relationship between the two countries' younger generation is as close as it can be.

The young have a different attitude towards Paki-

stan, he said.

"The older generation in China has a great affection for Pakistan. In their mind, Pakistan is China's best friend," he said. "But the younger generation knows less about Pakistan."

Awan said he has often heard young people tell him, "My father told me Pakistan is a good friend of China's." But then they'll ask elementary questions such as, "What is Pakistan's capital?" and "What's Pakistan's primary language?"

"These young Chinese in fact represent the younger generation's understanding of Pakistan," he said.

He added that Pakistan once had many Chinese students, in the 1980s and 1990s, but fewer and fewer Chinese have chosen to study in Pakistan in recent years.

"An old Chinese saying goes 'Man struggles upwards, water flows downwards,'" he said. "Younger Chinese have more choices now. They have higher dreams and are willing to go to developed countries. But people in the older generation have a duty to pass on our long-standing friendship to the next generation."

Wokai starts art projects to support microfinance

By Annie Wei

Founded in November 2008 by two American women, Wokai, a non-profit aimed at alleviating poverty in China through microfinance, has been winning support from the public.

In order to raise money to continue its mission of helping the poor through small, low-interest loans, the organization is holding a December 2 sale of eight limited edition photos by Chengdu photographer Chen Chunlin at Green T. House.

The photos are all of Wokai micro-loan recipients, showing how they set

up businesses in rural areas to lift themselves out of poverty.

Chen, the photographer, said he got to know more than 20 recipients in a week for the project and was impressed by their works.

"With Wokai's financial support, they can gradually grow their businesses and improve their living standard," Chen said.

All proceeds from the sales – estimated to be 70 percent of the photos' value – will go toward microloans. People who buy the prints can actu-

ally choose a specific person and project to support.

Each photo has 280 prints and prices range from 1,575 to 2,835 yuan. The photographs will soon be exhibited in cities across China and North America, and in Singapore.

Using art to help people is meant to raise the profile of emerging Chinese artists.

"Over the next year we will be leveraging our network of over 400 volunteers in 27 cities around the world and roll this out into a global movement of

art for change," said Casey Wilson, CEO and co-founder of Wokai.

In three years, Wokai has raised 1.89 million yuan in loan capital, attracted 8,100 users and given loans to 820 borrowers.

For people who cannot go to the event but want to support the organization, visit wokai.org.

Green T. House

Where: 6 Gongti Xi Lu, Chaoyang District

Open: 7:30 – 9:30 pm

Tel: 6552 8310

Beijing Playhouse's special holiday program for toddlers



Photo by Zhang Xiaoxiao

By Annie Wei

Beijing Playhouse's Christmas comedy *Cinderella* is scheduled for next month.

But because the show is two hours long, director Chris Verrill said it may not be the most child-friendly show. However, he will arrange a special event for children up to 5 years old.

Characters like Cinderella, Prince Charming, their lovable dogs, fairy godmother and her fairies will meet children and sing Christmas carols for them. The wicked stepmother and evil sisters will be there as well – children are encouraged to boo and hiss at them.

Where: Trojan House Theater, 6-31, 22 International Art Plaza, between Guomao, Dawanglu and Shuangjing subway stations

When: December 11, 12:15-12:45 pm

Cost:

Free, but reservation is requested

Email:

performance@beijingplayhouse.com

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City museums seeking volunteers

By Zhao Hongyi

Museums are the best resources for people to deepen their knowledge. The city has a handful of enthusiasts who have an interest in volunteering at museums every year.

Beijing has 159 museums, mainly funded by local government, but only 32 have volunteer programs and few provide bilingual services, according to a recent survey conducted by the Association of Beijing Museums.

"The comprehensive large-scale museums, such as the Forbidden City Museum, National Museum of China and Capital Museum of Beijing, have full internal management and a qualified volunteering program," the report said, "but many mid-sized and small museums are far from satisfactory."

The reason might be the lack of popularity of these small museums. "Many people have never heard of these museums, which makes it difficult for them to recruit qualified volunteers."

Another factor is the lack of an overarching system to manage and coordinate the volunteers, according to the report.

The museums in Beijing have had volunteer programs for a decade, but there's hardly any overlap in the programs. "It turns out that museums and volunteers don't know each other," the report said.

The survey showed that Beijing's museums have more than 1,000 volunteers. Most work as guides.

National Agriculture Exhibition Center

The National Agriculture Exhibition Center on East Third Ring Road is famous for hosting trade fairs and bazaars every year, but few know the center has six permanent exhibitions covering agricultural history, technology and the processing industry.

The exhibition center has 16 professional guides but none of them speak a second language. The museum began promoting volunteer programs years ago, but the results were not ideal.

"The volunteers we used before were university students, but they had to study during weekdays and went out on the weekends," said Lin Zhengtong, director of social education at the museum. The volunteer program lasted only a month.

Lin said the museum should



Many retired professionals are experienced and knowledgeable volunteers.

Photos provided by Beijing Youth Daily



At the entrance of Wangfujing Paleolithic Museum

be at the top of many potential volunteers' lists after it completes its current round of renovation and expansion.

The museum is scheduled to recruit two types of volunteers, Lin said. One is the professional guide who is interested in the exhibits and has basic knowledge of agricultural history.

The other type is the simple fan who can hopefully provide ideas on how to perfect exhibitions and organize events such as lectures, seminars and workshops.

"The volunteer program for 2012 will start soon," Lin said.

Contact: Lin Zhengtong
Tel: 6509 6066

Wangfujing Paleolithic Museum

It's ironic that a museum dedicated to humanity's distant past would be found on a street buzzing with the commerce of humanity present. On Wangfujing Avenue, under the Oriental Plaza, the Paleolithic museum displays artifacts found in Beijing and Tianjin from up to 25,000 years ago.

The museum has eight professional staffers but no guide. If necessary, the museum curator will fill that role.

"It's quite rare to find such a long history of human

presence in a large city," a staff member said. When the museum opened in 2001, it attracted many visitors, but its momentum was irrevocably hurt by the SARS epidemic in 2003.

Now people don't give the museum a second glance as they shop for Rolex watches and brand-name silk.

"We receive only a dozen visitors per day," a staff member said. "Most are foreign visitors. Students will come sometimes if they're on break."

"We welcome volunteers and even had a program before," said Li Qiang, the curator. "But most students lack the enthusiasm to offer their time. What they needed was the certificate we handed out stating they had been a volunteer."

Li said they welcome volunteers directly rather than from students organizations.

Contact: Li Qiang
Tel: 8518 6306

Museum of Soong Ching-ling Former Residence

The Museum of Soong Ching-ling's Former Residence recruits volunteers year-round. Everyone can apply to be a guide but the process is strict and comparatively complicated.

The candidate has to complete a questionnaire and write a cover letter. After a week of training, the museum will then arrange for the volunteer to receive visitors.

"We have 20 volunteers year-round, mostly students and office workers," said Shen Bing, director for volunteer program of the museum. They work mainly over the weekends, either in the morning or in the afternoon.

Soong Ching-ling was the wife of Sun Yet-san, founder of the Republic of China, and the vice president of the People's Republic of China after 1949. She lived in the traditional courtyard from 1963 until her death in 1981.

Her younger sister is the wife of Chiang Kai-shek, who ruled China during World War II before being driven to Taiwan after the revolution.

Due to her historical status, she was respected by descendants and foreign political families around the world.

"We are expecting more volunteers who can speak other languages besides English, as we receive many foreign visitors from non-English speaking countries and regions," Shen said.

Contact: Shen Bing
Tel: 6401 5256

Beijing Museum of Natural History

"We receive more than 3,000 applications to be our volunteers each year," said Huang Chen, director for social education and president of volunteers at the Beijing Museum of Natural History. "We hire nearly 400 each year."

The museum currently has 96 volunteers. At least 30

work per week.

"We'll recruit more volunteers next spring," Huang said. "Every volunteer has to complete 40 training hours before taking our test which include the knowledge of natural history capability of communication and quality of behaviour."

Contact: Zhang Fangfang
Tel: 6702 4438

Capital Museum of Beijing

One of the most exclusive places for museum volunteers to work is the Capital Museum as the museum is the largest grand museum in Beijing over the past decade.

"We recruit 150 volunteers every year, and among them, we have amateur volunteers who are doctors, office workers and some retired Chinese ambassadors," said Yang Dandan, director of social education of the Capital Museum.

Due to their social standing and experience, these volunteers are a special feature of the museum itself. Seven of Yang's volunteers have signed contracts to work free for 1,000 hours over five years.

Contact: Yang Hailian
Tel: 6337 0440

How to apply volunteering in museums

The association of Beijing Museum is preparing a permanent website for the recruitment of volunteers, according to Yang Dandan.

"We'll offer more positions and work more closely with different museums to distribute selected volunteers," Yang said.

Association of Beijing Museums

Contact: Yang Dandan
Tel: 6400 1628

Back to the beginning

Art festival seeks answer to 'what is theater?'



Lin Zhaohua

By He Jianwei

The 75-year-old theater director Lin Zhaohua is controversial: many praise his breaking of boundaries, but some condemn his tampering with classical works. Whether people love him or not, he is one of the most influential figures in Chinese theater.



Lailonia by Poland's Kana Theater



A Sentimental Piece for Four Actors by Poland's Montownia Theater



Pei Yanling in a Kunqu opera

Center stage

Programs

Five Acts of Life

Lin Zhaohua's adaptation of Lao She's five short stories depicts ordinary people in Chinese society in the 1930s and 1940s.

When: November 21-22, 7:30 pm

A Sentimental Piece for Four Actors

Presented by Montownia Theater from Poland, this physical drama tells the bittersweet lives of four actors without the use of words.

When: November 23-25, 7:30 pm

Opera Master: Pei Yanling

Pei Yanling is a versatile opera master who sings Peking, Kunqu and Hebei regional opera.

When: November 26-27, 7:30 pm

Life on a Sting

Adapted from Shi Tiesheng's novel about the life of a blind old ballad monger, conductor Qu Xiaosong has created this one-act opera that is directed by Lin Zhaohua.

When: November 29-30, 7:30 pm

Gift

Presented by Kammerspiele Munchen, the play explores marital problems through the first encounter of a divorced couple that reunites after six years at their child's grave.

When: December 1-2, 7:30 pm

The Master Builder

Lin Zhaohua's production of Henrik Ibsen's story tells how a mysterious fire gives a destructive genius the opportunity to become a master architect.

When: December 3-4, 7:30 pm

The Man Outside

Written by German playwright Wolfgang Borchert in 1946, the play describes the hopelessness of a post-war soldier returning from Russia to find that he has lost his wife and his home.

When: December 6-7, 7:30 pm

Lailonia

Based on Polish philosopher Leszek Kolakowski's 13 *Tales from the Kingdom of Lailonia for the Young and Old*, this production by Poland's Kana Theater conveys the helplessness of human beings and their confusion with values.

When: December 9-11, 7:30 pm

Ivanov

Lin Zhaohua's adaptation of Anton Chekhov's first full-length play describes the sad life of a Russian intellectual.

When: December 13-18, 7:30 pm

Drum Song of Tianjin

Tianjin is famous for its Chinese opera. The show includes classic episodes, telling ancient stories with drum accompaniment.

When: December 16, 7:30 pm

Where: Capital Theater, 22 Wangfujiang Dajie, Dongcheng District
Admission: 80-680 yuan, 40 yuan for students
Tel: 6525 0996

Lin Zhaohua's adaptation of Henrik Ibsen's *The Master Builder*
Photos provided by Lin Zhaohua Theater Art Festival

dreams," Tong said.

Lin said he is very unsatisfied with Chinese drama, which tends to fall into predictable and stereotyped patterns. "Some people label me a realist, others an expressionist. Actually I have no style and belong to no school. I'm just a person who works in theater," he said.

In addition to plays, the festival will present several Chinese operas performed by opera master Pei Yanling with drum performances by the Tianjin traditional opera troupe.

"I have been working in theater for my whole life. Sometimes, I become confused about what it is," Lin said. "We do not have a drama tradition in China, and the theories of our theater have been imported from Europe. Only local opera can we call our own."

Lin borrows the techniques from traditional opera in his modern works. In his plays, the characters are also the story's storytellers. They often break the fourth wall, speaking directly to the audience. "My education often benefits from traditional opera," he said. "In fact, it's easy to answer what theater is. It is just a way to tell a story — to tell what happens to a person."

"That's it."

international drama from them. Besides the international works, Lin is also presenting three plays and one of his own operas at this year's festival.

Born in 1936 in Tianjin, Lin started his career as a theater director in the late 1970s. He is credited with founding the Small Theater Movement in the early 1980s with his realistic works.

Among his inspirations is the Russian critical realist writer Anton Chekhov, whose *The Cherry Orchard* he adapted in 2004. Unlike the original, Lin's production was more pungent than humorous.

This year, he is adapting Chekhov's first full-length play *Ivanov*, a four-act drama created in 1887 about a man whose world is shaken by an ill wife, mounting debts and desire.

Lin chose the play because he said it was a symbol of Russian intellectuals, reflects the situation many Chinese intellectuals face today.

Tong Daming, a leading Chinese critic of Russian drama, translated the script. "It is a play about suffering. The character feels pain, not because of poverty, but because he fails to pursue his



CFP Photo

Five Acts of Life directed by Lin Zhaohua

Delicate hothouse flower and social outcast

By Charles Zhu

Jon-Jon Goulian, a middle-class American and grandson of philosopher Sidney Hook, recounts his strange behavior and traces the causes in his memoir *The Man in the Gray Flannel Skirt*. He attributes his oddness to an obsession with appearance, panic about choosing a career path and imposing family expectations.

The author, now in his 40s, grew up in La Jolla, California, with a hematologist father and a lawyer mother. He graduated from Columbia University and the New York University School of Law, after which he became an assistant editor at *The New York Review of Books*.

"My most recent bout of employment, for \$12 an hour, was babysitting a 7-year-old girl named Ruth," he writes in this book's introduction.

Goulian wears Steve Madden high-heeled shoes. The great thing about high heels, he writes, is that in them "I looked not like a tree stump" but "like Baryshnikov." He applies lip stick and perfume. He wears halter tops, Scotch skirts and Malay sarongs. He plucks up his eyebrows, waxes his chest and pierces his ears. Tattoos twine his body like vines up to his neck. He has had two nose jobs and expects another in the future.

At his high school prom, he went dressed in white tights, a black skirt, a red bow tie, red lipstick and a Viking hat: "I don't want hugs and high fives. I want gasps of shock and horror. There is a conspiracy of indifference against me, and I can't take it."

Goulian writes about the American middle class's inability to handle its lack of determination, and about his desire to live as he wishes. More importantly, perhaps, he loves to wear women's clothes, claiming they suit him. He says that he

couldn't be a lawyer because a suit makes him look like an ogre: "short, bald, big-nosed, beady-eyed, bowlegged."

"In a tank top cropped above my belly button, on the other hand," he says, "I would be able to draw the viewer's gaze away from my head and to my choicest spots – my broad shoulders, my slender neck, my slim and muscular arms, and my tight little tummy."

Goulian says in his own words that he was forever on the verge of "caving in beneath the pressures of modern life." He fears things ranging from competition to pimples, from sex to saturated fat.

With his two older brothers, one a Harvard man and the other a Yale man, he believed he could never live up to the expectations of his famous grandfather, the political philosopher Sidney Hook, who repeatedly castigated him for his intellectual failings. Once, in the summer of 1987, when Goulian visited his grandfather in Vermont, the old man, infuriated by his affect, held a rolled-up copy of *Commentary* magazine in one hand, as if to smack his grandson like a horsefly.

In Hook's mind, his grandson in his odd attire embodied the end of Western civilization.

Goulian could hardly bear such pressure and felt very much cornered, thrown into despair and a sense of insecurity. He rebelled and tried to keep conventional expectations at

bay and resorted to skirts, leggings, halter tops and high heels.

His grandfather once asked him, "Are you gay?" Goulian, who calls himself a "sexually neutered androgyne," declared unambiguously that he was not. Nor is he a cross-dresser, he says. "Stockings, wigs, pancake makeup and whatever else cross-dressers do that I don't do – keep it away from me," he said.

He portrays his philos-



The Man in the Gray Flannel Skirt

By Jon-Jon Goulian, 336pp, Random House, \$25

opher grandfather in a bitersweet and loving way. He ridicules his grandfather's "trademark high-pitched cackle" and inability to overcome the mental shackles of the past – hang-ups that prevented him from letting anyone flush a toilet or take a shower for longer than 5 minutes.

Goulian and his brothers, behind Hook's back, resented him as a grumpy Neanderthal.

Though he says he sleeps with women, female bodies irritate Goulian. He compared one woman's hairy armpit to "a highly bohe-

mian and Semitic" thing. When having sex, he captures another woman at this sight: "mouth open, slobber dripping off her lower lip, upper teeth jutting out, like that dying horse in Picasso's *Guernica*."

In this interesting and heartfelt memoir, Goulian with his witticism and unique voice comes to terms with his true self. Reading Goulian's memoir will help people understand those eccentricities of America's middle class intellectuals in the novels of Philip Roth and Saul Bellow, and in the short stories of New England's John Cheever.

CNPIEC Bookstore book listing

The China National Publication Import and Export Corporation's (CNPIEC) bookstore recommends these new arrivals to *Beijing Today* readers.



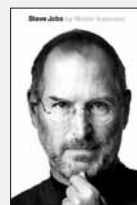
John Byrne: Art and Life
By Robert Hewison, 144pp, Lund Humphries, 375 yuan

This is the first monograph to explore Byrne's artistic journey in both the visual and literary fields, and celebrates his contribution to contemporary Scottish cultural identity. A prolific painter, illustrator and print-maker, Byrne boasts a range of works held in prestigious public collections such as The National Gallery of Art, Edinburgh. Including a valuable catalog of Byrne's prints, Hewison's highly readable text provides a chronological, critical account of the work and life of the artist.



Falcon Seven
By James Huston, 560pp, St. Martin's Paperbacks, 70 yuan

A Navy F/A-18 fighter jet gets shot down over Pakistan and its two pilots are tried as war criminals in James Huston's latest blend of legal and political thrillers. Jack Caskey, a Navy Seal turned defense attorney, is asked to represent the pilots in a court case being heard in The Hague at the International Criminal Court.



Steve Jobs
By Walter Isaacson, 656pp, Simon & Schuster, 180 yuan

Based on more than 40 interviews with Steve Jobs conducted during two years, as well as interviews with more than 100 family members, friends, adversaries, competitors and colleagues, Walter Isaacson has written a riveting story of the roller-coaster life and intense personality of a creative entrepreneur.

(By He Jianwei)

Ink and brush master blazes new way

By Charles Zhu

Ink painting is an integral part of traditional culture, providing contemporary artists a huge space to explore and experiment. Many contemporary artists and critics believe new ink and wash painting will play a crucial role in helping China establish a new cultural identity.

When you look at an ink and brush painting in which a group of ladies are coming out of a bathing pool in a Chinese garden, covered with flower-patterned sarongs, it can be hard to tell whether it is an ancient work or modern.

The scene is ancient, as these are typical beauties of the Tang Dynasty (618-907), plump, full-bosomed, with willowy waists, and the painter is a virtuoso in applying his ink and brush to render the elegance of such aristocrats. Yet it is modern, as the ladies are mostly nude.

The painting, *Imperial Concubine Yang Comes Out of a Bath*, is one of many collected at The Soul of the Honest, a solo exhibition for the 70-year-old Sichuan painter Peng Xiancheng at the gallery of the Beijing Academy of Arts.

The success of Peng's exhibition moved the Beijing Publishing House to assemble an album of more than 700 pictures of his works, which represent long-standing artistic pursuit and a courageous break with tradition.

Peng is humble and has a keen mind for art. He is particularly good at portraying ancient Chinese beauties, warriors on horseback, flowers and landscapes in scenes with profound poetic implication. He once won a Sichuan provincial prize for his paintings that tried to interpret Tang poet Bai Juyi's poem *Profound Sorrow*, a description of the tragic love between Emperor Xuanzong and his concubine Yang. Most of his paintings have some corresponding verse in ancient literature.

Peng shocked the art world with his ink and brush painting of Cai Wenji, a Han lady scholar who married a Hun, on her return to the Han Dynasty. What is most striking about the portrait is its fluent lines and the exquisite and seemingly whimsical strokes that faithfully and artistically render the beauty's elegance and rich mental power. The painting is now being kept by the National Gallery of Art.

Peng, who has no formal training in the arts, achieved success on his own. He is seen as unique for his meigu, or boneless, style, which allows ink to travel freely in ever-changing movements on the paper. He does not use pre-planned sketch lines, resulting in images that come into being both accidentally and remarkably. While Peng did not pioneer the technique, he is considered the artist who has most developed it.

Peng, who was born in 1941 in Chengdu, Sichuan Province, graduated from a normal school in 1962 and was an art instructor at an elementary school. He went to work at a district workers' cultural center and then at a children's palace to tutor.

Early in his career, Peng made a solo sketch tour of the Greater and Lesser Liangshan area where the Yi ethnic group lives. His paintings also covered the Dunhuang Grottoes and ancient remains in Xinjiang. He attempted cartoons, New Year pictures, picture stories and oil paintings before focusing on ink and brush work, making a name for himself in the early 1980s.

Chen Danqing, a famous art critic and painter, said in a commentary that Peng's paintings are beautiful, pure, elegant and simple. He said Peng has inherited the good points of artists in structure, the use of ink and water and style over the last hundred years, combining the techniques of Ji Baishi, Lin Fengmian, Li Keran and Huang Zhou.



Beijing Publishing House released Peng Xiancheng's new albums last month.



Peng has inherited the good points of artists in structure, the use of ink and water and style over the last hundred years, combining the techniques of Ji Baishi, Lin Fengmian, Li Keran and Huang Zhou.



New collections for winter looks



Ye Qian's collection *The Cooler World*

Photos provided by Ye Qian's studio

By Annie Wei

Black, gray and camel are the popular colors for winter jacket and wool coats, and matching an oversized down jackets with tights is the "in" look among modern women.

All the above can be found at Brand New China (BNC), which held a 2011 Fall and Winter and 2012 Spring fashion show two weeks ago.

The event was the largest show for original designs in China hosted by BNC, which has only been around a year but aims to bring more promising local designers.

In this issue, *Beijing Today* will review the new collections of three designers.

We like Liu Lu's collection the most, with cute nude and light camel cashmere and wool coats to match its leggings or tight pants with dark heels.

Liu's style is one of simple elegance and playful sexiness. Her items aren't designed for any specific mold of women, such as "foreign," "tall," "artsy," or "over 40."

It's clear that Liu has been influenced by her time spent living in Paris and New York. Her designs are chic and functional.

The second collection is from Ye Qian, a 24-year-old emerging designer favored by many fashion and design magazines. He came to the spotlight three years ago as a substitute contestant in a TV fashion competition in 2008. A year later, he established his own brand, YE'S.

In his new collection, *The Cooler World*, he uses black-and-white stripes to represent the future and the cold. We like his faded camel coat, which is simply designed yet gives an aura of masculinity.

The third designer is Leo Kong, 22, who has been studying abroad in Esmod, a haute couture art school in France, for the past three years.

You can find many trendy elements in his collection, such as the use of different materials in tops and pants. Kong said he focuses on handiwork and material quality, and is influenced in these areas by Italian fashion. In his seasonal men's wear, Kong is both a designer and model.



Leo Kong models for his men's wear collection.

Photo provided by Leo Kong



New designers' collections for 2011 fall and winter

Where: BNC, B09A, The Village North, 19 Sanlitun Lu, Chaoyang District

Open: 10 am - 9:30 pm
Tel: 6416 9045

Liu Lu's new collection

Photos provided by Liu Lu

High-class Australian beef for city's highest restaurant

By Annie Wei

For those who crave beef, the special menu designed by David Blackmore featuring Wagyu beef at Grill 79 – available until December 15 – is not to be missed.

David Blackmore is an Australian company that produces Wagyu beef, which is native to Japan. The company got its start in 1991 when Japan changed its export quota system due to dwindling land resources and increasing demand. It has since become a preferred brand among high-end restaurants in 11 countries.

The David Blackmore Wagyu beef is known for its intense flavor and fine marbling.

In Beijing, only two restaurants provide Black Davidmore Wagyu – Grill 79 in China World Summit Wing and Aria.

Grill 79 chef Ryan Dadufalza created six dishes using beef from different parts of the cow. Many people like the hand-cut beef tartare (230 yuan), an appetizer using beef from behind a cattle's neck, with grain mustard, poached quail egg and toast.

A Wagyu moves its head to eat or drink water, so that part's texture is chewier and has more favor. In Japan, this kind of beef is used in Yakiniku, a kind of hotpot.

For something special, we recommend the pho (200 yuan). The beef is from a fillet in a Wagyu's shoulder. The marble is well dispersed in the muscle and melts in the mouth.

The chef prepares it in Vietnamese pho style: the beef is quickly cooked with onion broth and brandied cream. The meat remains tender and slightly pink.

Another recommended dish is the charcoal ribeye (888 yuan). The juicy meat goes well with Dadufalza's special South Pacific sauce, which is light and a bit sour.

For people who like chewier textures, try the crispy beef croquette (230 yuan) with corn flakes, slow cooked egg and white truffle; glazed tenderloin (888 yuan), with horseradish broth, rice, butter and soy sauce or beef and barley (488 yuan), braised in brown ale with shallots and potatoes.

For a wine, the restaurant's sommelier, Koen Masschelein, suggests pairing with Australian red, cognac or imported ale.

Grill 79

Where: Floor 79, China World Summit Wing, 1 Jianguomen Wai Dajie, Chaoyang District

Open: Noon – 2 am next day
Tel: 6505 2299 ext. 6425



Charcoal ribeye, 888 yuan (top); beef tartare, 230 yuan (middle); glazed tenderloin, 888 yuan

Photos by Yu Tingmei

Salt your autumn



Sea salt and caramel pumpkin mousse, starting from 189 yuan



Tiffany gift-box of cupcakes



Red velvet cake

Photos provided by Piehouse

By Chu Meng

There's a saying that salty is the flavor of autumn. Perhaps that explains the timing of Pie House's latest dessert: the sea salt caramel pumpkin mousse.

Although every word in that confectionary seems to clash with one another, it is a delicious violation of local food conventions, and those who try it can expect to find an unexpected harmony on the tongue.

The dessert is Pie House's two-year-old anniversary present.

It was founded in 2009 by Mark Huetsch, who brought to Beijing his 82-year-old grandmother's handwritten recipe book from his hometown in Illinois.

With his wife Wang Jing, a Beijing native, the couple started making authentic American pies and cakes for delivery. The place's Chinese name – Paiyue Fang – means "delivering joy." They offer two categories of desserts: authentic recipes from grandma and Huetsch's own creations.

The sea salt and caramel pumpkin mousse belongs to the latter category. Huetsch said the combination of sea salt and caramel comes from French chocolate-making tradition techniques and is popular in royal European households.

In French, sea salt is translated as "flower of the ocean." Production of quality sea salt is done by hand, and raw materials are only selected from the purest salt crystals at the top of salt beds.

Huetsch blends grinded sea salt grains with handmade caramel syrup. He subtly controls the sizes of the salt grains so that a certain quantity of unmelted crystals can be tasted.

"It's like the salt grains play around with your tongue," said Gan Tian, a taster. The top pumpkin layer is made with pumpkin jelly balls and cream cheese. It is inspired from the popular pioneer "gourmet" concept.

Each jelly ball is small as a mung bean, made from handmade pumpkin juice. The balls form when Huetsch injects the juice into a glass of cold water with a syringe.

"I majored in computer science, so I have my own understanding of molecule cooking," Huetsch said. "The procedure for making the jelly balls is more sophisticated than it appears. Besides, we put secret ingredients into the cold water. People call me a pumpkin geek."

The geek's sea salt and caramel pumpkin mousse is expensive, from 189 yuan for 6 inches to 650 yuan for 12 inches.

Pie House is also offering a traditional cake from grandma's category, called "the gift of the earth goddess" (189 to 650 yuan), made with cheese, carrots and nuts. The level of sweetness or sourness can be adjusted.

Pie House will roll out a new red velvet cake and Tiffany gift-box of cupcakes next month.

Anyone interested can order at piehouse.com.cn.

Electronic sound with simple, straight energy



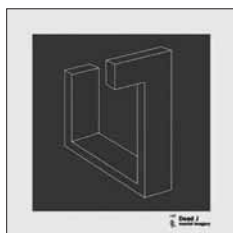
Dead J (left) performing last Saturday at his album release party.

By He Jianwei

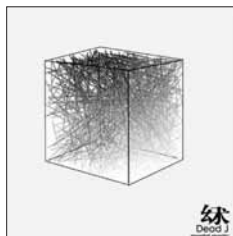
For many Chinese, electronic music is the stuff of night-clubs. But experimental musicians have broadened the realm in the past 10 years. Shao Yanpeng, known as Dead J, is one of the key figures of the new generation.

Shao has produced four albums and composed soundtracks for movies and experimental theater for much of the last decade.

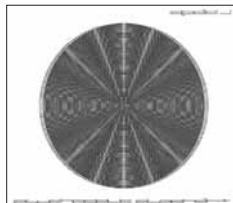
His latest album, *Ting Tai Lou Ge*, released earlier this month, initiates a dialogue between traditional and modern music using industrial sounds.



Debut album *Mental Imagery*



Second album *Mental Magic*



Third album *Psychedelic Elephant*

Photos provided by Dead J

After a three-year break, Dead J returned with his fourth album recently. At the release party last Saturday, he performed with VJ Dora S at the Haze.

The performance, called "The Shape of Sound," was an interactive audio-visual collaboration between these two artists. VJ Dora S transformed the sound into geometric shapes such as dots, lines, planes, triangles, squares and spheres.

In his latest album, Dead J gets away from his trademark electronic sounds called intelligent dance music, using analog instruments and industrial noise as source material.

In 2009, he planned to make four EPs called *Ting*, *Tai*, *Lou* and *Ge*, names taken from ancient Chinese pavilions and pagodas. When he finished nearly 30 demos, he decided to make an album instead.

"People may think my music is different than their impression of ancient Chinese architecture, because the sound is industrial," Dead J said. "I am interested in the topic of conflict between traditional and modern. For instance, when I drive a car on the viaduct, the giant reinforced-concrete buildings I pass are like pavilions and pagodas to me."

Born in 1981 in Hebei Province, Shao founded

a punk rock band with his friends in college under the influence of grunge. After the band's break-up, he couldn't find others who shared his ambitions, so he began making electronic music.

"At first, I was interested because I could finish a song all by myself," he said.



Latest album *Ting Tai Lou Ge*

In 2003, he released his first single, "Crush Mongolia," in a Sino-Japanese compilation album called *Yellow Peril*, edited by Feng Jiangzhou, who introduced Shao to the electronic world.

That year, he began collaborating with the Shanshui label founded by Sun Dawei and formed an electronic duo, Panda Twin, with Sun (also known as Sulumi). In the following compilation published by Shanshui, he released another single, "Girl Power," a breakcore piece mixed with hard noise.

His first solo album, *Mental Imagery*, was released in 2005

after he joined Modern Sky Records, one of the largest indie labels on the mainland. In this album, he gave up the breakcore style and applied IDM and glitch music.

One year later, he released his second album, *Mental Magic*, which was awarded Best Electronic Album in 2006 by the Chinese Music Media Awards.

His 2008 album *Psychedelic Elephant* was regarded as the last in the trilogy, exploring the relationship between sound and space. He created an imaginary future in his music where he is an astronaut who brings the audience into outer space.

Dead J has also composed for theater and movie projects. He has collaborated with the pioneer theater director Meng Jinghui several times since 2004, including for *Maze*, *Rhinoceros in Love* and *Soft*. In 2009, he designed the sound for the Pavilion of Future at the Shanghai World Expo.

Shao performed in Germany in 2009. During his visit, he made a documentary, interviewing eight musicians, visual artists and label founders in Berlin's electronic music scene: Monolake, Jan Jelinek, Pole, Manuel Gottsching, Porn Sword Tobacco, Thomas Fehlmann, Thaddi Herrmann and Christopher Bauder.

After the visit, he created his fourth album. "After years of dissection and denial, I want my music to come with simple, straight energy," he said.

By Zhang Dongya

Thousands of parents who lost their children in the Wenchuan earthquake hope that their dead children may be able to come back if they give birth to another baby.

Among them is Ye Hongmei.

The Next Life, a new documentary by Fan Jian, records the story of a 40-year-old woman and her husband as they make every effort to have a second child. The birth – or lack of one – will decide their life after the disaster.

“Life itself is a good screenplay.”



Ye Hongmei and her husband, who lost their daughter in the earthquake, wanted to have a girl.

The cycle of life

At 2:28 pm, May 12, 2008, an earthquake destroyed Wenchuan County in Sichuan Province. The disaster killed or crippled the children of more than 6,000. Due to the national family planning policy, for many that meant the death of their only heir. Some 5,000 of the families hoped to give birth to another child.

“After the Wenchuan Earthquake, as a documentary director, I kept thinking about going there. But like most people, I was paralyzed at the thought of the disaster. It took a year before I mustered the courage to visit the quake zone and meet some of the survivors, including Ye Hongmei’s family,” Fan said.

Ye lived in Dujiangyan, about 100 kilometers from Wenchuan. She lost her 8-year-old daughter. She constantly carried photos of the girl in her wallet, and on special days went with her husband to the government-built cemetery to visit their daughter. Many other parents whose children were in the same class or school went with them.

Most hoped to have another child. But their reasoning was different from many other victims of the quake: Ye and the others believed their dead children could return to life if they have a new baby.

Ye wanted to have a daughter, not a son. She could not accept that her daughter was dead. One of Ye’s friends surnamed Liu, who also lost a daughter in the quake, had a son later and was sad because she believed it meant her daughter would never come back.

The director followed three families starting in 2009. Aside from Ye and her husband, he also followed Ma Jun, who gave birth to another baby after the quake, and Pu Li, who did not want to have another child, saying nothing could replace the one who died.

Ma’s success was seen as a model and encouraged other families; those like Pu struggled to cope with their loss.

As a 40-year-old in poor



Fan Jian (right) recorded the Dujiangyan people for a year and a half.

Photos provided by Fan Jian

health, Ye had little hope to have a baby naturally. Her beliefs in reincarnation ruled out the option of adoption. At the end of 2009, she began attempting invitro fertilization (IVF) in Chengdu, where she could receive two free treatments according to national policy.

But the treatment was difficult. She had to go to the Chengdu hospital to have her blood drawn and return to Dujiangyan for the followup acupuncture. The long-distance bus took one hour each way. Her husband Zhu, who is unemployed, could not afford to accompany her.

Many women attended the same IVF treatments as Ye. Some succeeded and some failed, and their experiences increased the pressure

on Ye’s family.

When Ye failed to carry the first egg, she began a second round of treatments in May 2010.

The film recorded the hard process and its effects on Ye and Zhu. Throughout the course, they were living in a temporary plank house after their previous apartment was destroyed in the quake.

Zhu, a heavy smoker and drinker, threatened to divorce Ye if she failed to have a child. Ye said three families in her daughter’s class had already broken up. They also considered surrogacy, but gave up when they learned it was even more expensive than IVF.

On the 2nd anniversary of the Wenchuan quake, Ye and the other parents hoped to hold a memorial service at

Xinjian Primary School, where their children died. Community security personnel and police rejected their request.

But the anniversary day did open a high-speed railway between Chengdu and Dujiangyan, reducing connection time between the cities to 40 minutes. The railway was constructed in only one year, and locals said it alone brought the city 20 years’ worth of infrastructure development.

Ye and her husband decided to take the train to Chengdu for a second try at IVF.

One of Ye’s wardmates was successful and got pregnant through the treatment. “Her daughter was back. She showed signs of pregnancy on the day she said she had a dream about her daughter,” Ye said.

Both Ye and her husband were delighted and encouraged by the couple’s success, but felt anxious about their own procedure.

Several days later, they learned had failed again. They left Chengdu in despair, with Zhu in tears and Ye silent.

“From Ye, I saw the deep strength of one who can endure in silence. Faced with pain, many Chinese people put for-

ward a facade of calm, but waves of sadness roll in their hearts,” Fan said.

Fan’s filming team left Dujiangyan after Ye failed the second time. Surprisingly, they received a call from her several days later saying she got pregnant – not through a medical procedure, but naturally. The team returned to Sichuan to record the celebration.

This May, they returned to Dujiangyan to film Ye giving birth to a son.

“The end was surprising. It showed the continuation of life,” Fan said.

In truth, Ye and her husband were disappointed by the birth of their son. The director chose to edit this out, saying that it leaves “more space for the audience.”

“The pain caused by the earthquake will not heal in two or three years. It will influence people’s lives for a decade or longer. Having another child may be part of the healing process, but in this case it seems like another blow to the family,” he said.

The film, co-produced with NHK, was selected for the International Documentary Film Festival in Amsterdam. Any awards it wins will be announced next week.

A hike into the past in Huailai, Zhangjiakou

By Zhang Dongya

About 100 kilometers west of Beijing, in Huailai County, are pieces of the ancient Great Wall, built during the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), as well as the country's largest ancient post station.

With fewer visitors and a less commercialized feel, this area offers traces of the past without the crowds that constantly remind you that you're stuck in the present.



The high peaks and deep valleys made this part of the Great Wall an important defensive stronghold in ancient times.

Yangbian Great Wall as model

Xiaonan Xinbu Town, located in the southeast of Huailai County, Hebei Province, is about 120 kilometers from Beijing. The ancient town is near Guanting Lake in the north and connects to Dingdu Mountain in the south. It has many historical sites. The most magnificent is Yangbian Great Wall.

Located in the mountain near Miaogang Village, it's also called the Miaogang Great Wall. The high peaks and deep valleys made this an important defensive stronghold in ancient times. The old wall zigzags through the mountain.

Locals are very proud of the Yangbian Great Wall. "If it was closer to Beijing, it'd definitely surpass Badaling's fame," a villager said.

Compared to the Great Wall

around Beijing, Yangbian is comparatively "wild." It was built using stones and rocks in irregular shapes from the mountainside. The wall itself, however, is sturdy. The tops are paved with large slabs of stone. Ochre moss grows on the stones form different patterns.

The wall, with renovations, stretches for more than 10 kilometers. The original Yangbian section accounts for 2.5 kilometers.

It is said that Xu Da, a Ming general, constructed part of the wall here as a model for the Juyongguan Pass. The model had a working beacon tower that made the wall look impregnable.

Legend has it that an inspector shot arrows at the wall as part of the test.

After hundreds of years though,

some parts of the Wall are broken, by both the weather and people who needed stones to build houses.

Another place to see in the area is Lijinggou Village in Xiaonan Xinbu Town, which features dozens of ancient cave dwellings.

The small village is built on a unique landform. With a large loess base, villagers live in large caves. They sleep on adobe kang beds that also serve as a stovetop. Some homes are decorated with black-and-white photos that hint at how life was lived many years ago.

The caves are cool during the summer and warm in the winter. Many elders who have grown up there prefer living in caves over furnished apartments.

Continued on page 21...

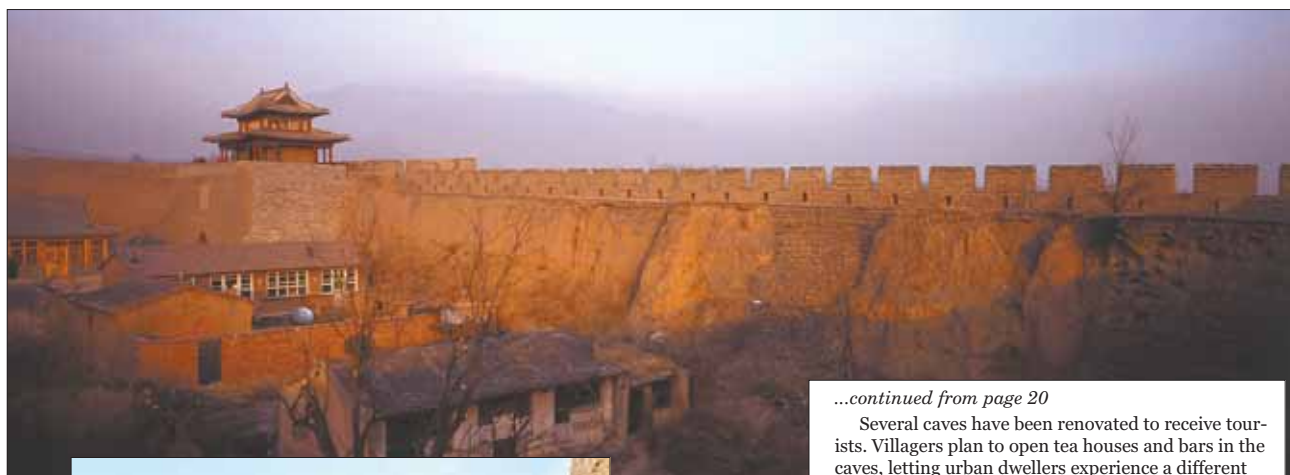


Yangbian is comparatively "wild" compared to the well-preserved Great Wall around Beijing.



Locals are very proud of the magnificent Yangbian Great Wall.

CFP Photos



Jimingyi is the largest ancient post station in the country today.

The old post station retains its original layout, with a square-shaped town and two kilometers of walls.



Delicate murals



An old yard where the Dowager Cixi is believed to have lodged for a night as she fled from Beijing.

Photo by Aizhongyuan



A typical local yard in the old town

CFP Photos

...continued from page 20

Several caves have been renovated to receive tourists. Villagers plan to open tea houses and bars in the caves, letting urban dwellers experience a different type of lifestyle.

Travel information

Getting there: Driving is advisable. Go along Badaling Expressway and then Beijing-Zhangjiakou Highway. Take the Donghuayuan exit and drive to Miaogang Village. You can park at the foot of the Yangbian Great Wall.

Admission to Yangbian Great Wall: 20 yuan

Open: 8:30 am – 6 pm

Accommodations: There are hotels and restaurants in Xiaonan Xinbu Town. Or you can stay in a cave dwelling in Lijinggou Village, which costs 60 yuan per night. Both Miaogang Village and Lijinggou Village offer local dishes. The average cost for a meal is about 20 yuan per person.

Hiking itineraries:

The Yangbian Great Wall has become a popular destination for hikers and outdoor enthusiasts. There are three routes to hike.

1. Start from Dapanying Village and climb the mountain via the footpath. Entering the Yangbian Great Wall area, walk until a stele that is near the 9th beacon tower. Go down the mountain from here to Hengling Village.
2. Start from Miaogang Village, climb the wall and exit at Hengling Village.
3. Start from Biancheng Village, climb up the wall and exit at Dapanying. It takes about 10 hours to finish this route, so it's better to make this a two-day hike and stay the night at Biancheng Village.

Jimingyi Post Station

After visiting Xiaonan Xinbu Town, drive 50 minutes northeast to reach Jimingyi, an ancient post station in Huailai County that dates back to the Yuan Dynasty (1206-1368). It was rebuilt during the Ming (1368-1644).

Today, the old post station retains its original layout. It is a square-shaped town with two kilometers of walls. There is an east gate and a west gate, both accompanied by towers. Five roads were built in the town, dividing the area into 12 districts.

The east gate, which has appeared in many films, has been restored and given a new appearance. Standing at the tower, you will see a broad road leading to the west gate. Some cottages are scattered on either side, which makes the town look like an ancient village.

In a narrow hutong, there is a delicate yard that is said to be where the Dowager Cixi lodged for a night as she fled to the place. The house features refined brick carvings at the gate and a board that reads "Dowager Cixi's one-night palace." Harvested corn cobs are piled in the yard, as well as some farm tools. There is a room with a wooden window, traditional tables and chairs, along with paintings about Qing emperors. The owner is always prepared to tell you the legend of Dowager Cixi and his yard.

Not far away is Taishan Temple, which is famous for its murals. It was built during the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), and the murals' colors are still vivid after hundreds of years.

Admission to Jimingyi: 30 yuan (20 yuan for students)

Tel: 0313-6814 580

Li Guoqing (right), a co-founder of Toy Photo Studio



Warping reality with tilt-shift lenses

By Chu Meng

The curious results of tilt-shift photography are turning the art into a sensation among photography fans on popular image sharing sites like Flickr.

The form uses selective focus lenses to bend light and turn reality into a pseudo-miniature model.

In China, the art has found many fans on domestic microblogs.

"I like it because I can reduce the world around me to a LEGO-like creation with the press of a shutter," said Li Guoqing, a co-founder of Toy Photo Studio, one of China's top tilt-shift photography fan groups.

His studio, founded in 2010, is one of the Top 10 photography microblogs. Its work has attracted hundreds of local photographers, both professionals and camera fans, to have a try at their own tilt-shift art.

Technically speaking, "tilt-shift" refers only to the type of selective focus lenses artists use to create miniature photographs, not to the photographs themselves. Such unorthodox lenses are able to tilt away from the image plane and shift parallel to the image plane, adjusting focus and creating distortion.

Li Guoqing and Shi Xiao, both 27, got the idea to start their miniature photography club while studying at China Communication University.

The two were collectors of limited edition figurines, especially those by Japanese artist Murakami Takashi and comic book author Yoshitomo Nara. They also liked figurines by American toy designer Kathie Olivas and animator Gary Baseman.

"Most of their works are limited editions for private collection. Some are even auctioned by Sotheby's in Hong Kong," Li said.

After graduating, they began traveling and had the idea to pose and photograph some of their figurines in natural locations.

They took pictures of the toys by coastal reefs, on the Great Wall and at the side of the road among bustling traffic.

One year later, while sharing their photos online, they stumbled across the tilt-shift photography of Vincent Laforet and Ben Thomas.

"Their toy-like dream-world effects on real urban scenes were overwhelming. It wasn't just that it was amusing — when life-size subjects and city scenes are shrunk into miniature, there is a sharp effect," Li said.

The two began experimenting with the photographic technique, using their toy collection as a source of models.

"Good miniature effects are achieved by

shooting from a high angle. It creates the illusion of looking down at a model. A camera with a tilt-shift lens is essential," he said.

Both Nikon and Canon offer lenses capable of taking tilt-shift photos. For shooters with lots of patience and a limited budget, the LensBaby series of creative lenses are capable of creating tilt-shift effects on a variety of SLR cameras.

For those not willing to commit to a dedicated tilt-shift lens, similar effects can be achieved with Adobe Photoshop and several Apple Apps for the iPad and iPhone. Qbro and TiltShift Generator, both available for free in the App Store, are among the most popular.



A typical tilt-shift lens.



Li's Tilt-shift photos use toy collection as a source of models.



Tilt-shift photography results in toy-like effects that reduce real urban scenes and subject to miniature.

Event

15 vehicles compete for 'Car of Beijing for 2012'

"Car of Beijing for 2012," organized by Beijing Youth Daily and Beijing Media Corporation, began the search last week for Beijing's best vehicle. The results of the professional testing and judges' debate will be announced in January.

The competition rates cars by their make and by their performance. Initial selection was completed last week, with the Passat of Shanghai Volkswagen, the Peugeot 508 and the Beijing Hyundai Sonata being shortlisted for the final 15.

Cars considered for the

competition must have appeared on the market between December 2010 and October 31, 2011. All must be new designs or models that have been revamped for release on the Chinese market.

The judging panel consists of journalists from Beijing

Youth Daily Group and its newspapers such as *The Mirror*, *Beijing Today*, *BQ Weekly* and *Ynet.com*. The CEO of Beijing Media Corporation and deputy editor-in-chief of *Beijing Youth Daily* will organize a group of editors to supervise the competition procedures and post results.



Airline

iPads arrive on Jetstar

Low-fare leader Jetstar will begin providing iPads on its flights, revolutionizing in-flight entertainment for its customers.

The cutting edge technology allows viewing of the latest movies, TV shows and music direct from Hollywood, and a line-up of the latest games, e-magazines and e-books, all enhanced by the high-resolution screen and premium sound system of the iPad.

iPads are being released on select Jetstar flights today and will be available on Australian domestic, trans-Tasman and short-haul international services from Australia and New Zealand in the coming weeks.

Customers who will be in the air more than two hours will be able to rent an iPad for \$10-\$15 on each flight.

Jetstar will begin with the release of 3,000 iPads, and expand this with more on its Asia network.

Jetstar Group Chief Executive Officer Bruce Buchanan said the iPads will offer customers a fantastic in-flight entertainment experience.



Swisstouches Hotels & Resorts partners with IDEaS in Xi'an

IDEaS Revenue Solutions, a leading provider of pricing and revenue management software, services and consulting, announced it will be partnering with Swisstouches Hotels & Resorts to deploy the IDEaS Revenue Management System (RMS) at its hotel in Xi'an.

Swisstouches Hotel, Xi'an

is a five-star luxury business establishment with 318 guest-rooms and suites. The Xi'an property is a flagship in China and represents a major investment. It opened in the fall of 2011.

"Xi'an is an important industrial and cultural hub in central China with abundant tourist attractions such

as the renowned Terracotta Warriors of Emperor Qin. In 2010, some 50 million international and domestic travelers visited Xi'an, a 25 percent increase over 2009," said Cedric Antonio, brand developer and digital strategist of Swisstouches Hotels & Resorts.

(By Jackie Zhang)

Dining

Hot chocolate delights

It's cold outside, and hot chocolate makes a great way to warm up!

If you fancy yourself as a hot chocolate connoisseur, come try the Flow Lounge & Bar's chocolate sensation – a combination of rich chocolate and whatever else you can imagine made special by your server.

If chocolate is not your fancy, have a cup of the traditional Gluhwein, the perfect drink to get in the Christmas spirit.

Where: Swissotel Beijing, 2 Chaoyangmen Bei Dajie, Chaoyang District
Tel: 6501 2288



Traditional Thanksgiving at Grand Millennium, Beijing

CBD International Cuisine at the Grand Millennium, Beijing is pleased to present a beautiful Thanksgiving buffet for you to share with friends, family and loved ones. On November 24, the Chef's Select Station will serve roasted turkey with cranberry sauce and giblet jus, lamb leg with marjoram jus, shepherd's pie and other Thanksgiving treats.

Reserve a table of four or more and have a real Thanksgiving experience with our chef, who will carve a whole turkey at your table. The 368-yuan price is something to be truly thankful for. Seats are limited, so reserve now.

Where: Grand Millennium Beijing, 7 Dongsanhuan Zhong Lu

When: November 24

Cost: 368 yuan per person (15 percent gratuity)

Tel: 8587 6888 ext. 3013

Hotel

Swisstouches Hotels & Resorts partners with IDEaS in Xi'an

IDEaS Revenue Solutions, a leading provider of pricing and revenue management software, services and consulting, announced it will be partnering with Swisstouches Hotels & Resorts to deploy the IDEaS Revenue Management System (RMS) at its hotel in Xi'an.

Swisstouches Hotel, Xi'an

is a five-star luxury business establishment with 318 guest-rooms and suites. The Xi'an property is a flagship in China and represents a major investment. It opened in the fall of 2011.

"Xi'an is an important industrial and cultural hub in central China with abundant tourist attractions such

as the renowned Terracotta Warriors of Emperor Qin. In 2010, some 50 million international and domestic travelers visited Xi'an, a 25 percent increase over 2009," said Cedric Antonio, brand developer and digital strategist of Swisstouches Hotels & Resorts.

(By Jackie Zhang)



Sat, Nov. 19



Nightlife Reflector

Founded in 1997 and regarded as one of China's first punk bands, this Beijing band is also one of the first bands from China to tour the US, performing in seven cities along the west coast in 2001.

Where: Star Live, 3/F Tango, 79 Heping Xi Jie, Dongcheng District
When: 9 pm
Admission: 80 yuan advance purchase, 120 yuan at the door
Tel: 6402 5080

Nightlife Black Century

Formed by keyboardist Zhang Zhang, Acid Live aims for an intersection of funk, electro, house, dub, trip-hop and acid jazz.

Where: Yugongyishan, 3-1 Zhangzizhong Lu, Dongcheng District
When: 10 pm
Admission: 60 yuan
Tel: 6553 2678

Movie Shattered (2011)

This documentary is the final chapter in Xu Tong's trilogy, telling the story of an 80-year-old father who lives alone in the village and his daughter, the owner of an unsuccessful "massage" business in the big city.

Where: Culture Yard, 10 Shique Hutong, Beixin Qiao, Dongcheng District

When: 8 pm
Admission: 60 yuan
Tel: 8404 4166



Fri, Nov. 18

released three EPs and one full-length album featuring catchy melodies and balancing rapture and grief.

Where: The One Club, Building 5, 718 Art and Culture Zone, 19 Ganluyuan, Gaobeidian Bei Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 8:30 pm

Admission: 100 yuan advance purchase, 150

Nightlife Luke Leighfield

Regarded as the UK's biggest underground pop star, this piano pop troubadour has released three albums in the past five years. His debut single "If You Haven't Got Anything to Say" entered the UK indie singles chart at No. 5 upon its release in 2008.

Where: Weibozhiyan Club, Room 2308, 3/F North Building, SOHO Shangdu, 8 Dongdaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 9:30 pm

Admission: 60 yuan, 50 yuan for students

Tel: 5900 0969

Exhibition Henry Hudson – Between a Rock and a Hard Place

This exhibition presents a dozen new paintings and a sculpture by British artist Henry Hudson, discussing the value of art and the creation of anxiety.

Where: F2 Gallery, 319 Caochangdi Village, Changyang District

When: Until January 30, 2012, daily except Monday, 11 am – 7 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 6432 8831



Tue, Nov. 22

Exhibition Nordic Photography Exhibition

This exhibition presents photos by seven artists from Sweden, Norway, Finland and Denmark, exploring human emotions, societal challenges and environmental issues such as climate change.

Where: Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (UCCA), 798 Art District, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until November 27, daily except Monday, 10 am – 6 pm

Admission: 15 yuan, 10 yuan for students

Tel: 8459 9269

Nightlife Mooncake

Founded in 2006, this Russian post-rock band has

yuan at the door
Tel: 5129 0082

Nightlife Ajinaï

This Mongolian folk band plays traditional instruments such as the horse-head-fiddle, a bow-and-string instrument with a neck carved like a horse's head. The band sings of love for nature and life.

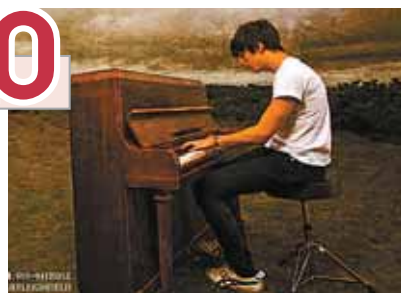
Where: Jianghu Bar, 7 Dongmianhua Hutong, Jiadaokou Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: 9 pm

Admission: 40 yuan

Tel: 6401 5269

Sun, Nov. 20



Mon, Nov. 21



Wed, Nov. 23

Movie

Lost in Translation (2003)

Directed by Sofia Coppola, this film is about an aging actor who develops a unique bond with a recent college graduate after they meet in a Tokyo hotel.

Where: Blue Goat Cafe, 3 Shuimo Xinqu (150 meters north of the west gate of Tsinghua University), Haidian District

When: 7:30 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 6265 5069

Thu, Nov. 24

Movie

Hairspray (2007)

Set in 1962 Baltimore, this film follows the "pleasantly plump" teenager Tracy Turnblad as she pursues stardom as a dancer on a local TV show and rallies against racial segregation.

Where: China Film Archive, 3 Wenhuiyuan Lu, Xiaoxitian, Haidian District

When: 7 pm

Admission:

20 yuan

Tel: 5900

9473

(By He Jianwei)

